DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 156 671 SP 012 866

AUTHOR Freeland, Kent
TITLE Assessing Student Teaching.
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 13p.; For related document, see SP012865

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Supervisors; Cooperating Teachers; Discipline Problems; Elementary Education; Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; *Preservice Education; Student Attitudes; Student Motivation; *Student Opinion; *Student Teachers; *Student Teaching; *Surveys; *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

The findings of a survey questionnaire given to student teachers at the University of Iowa are presented. The most notable conclusions from this study are: (1) motivating disinterested students, handling disciplinary problems, and evaluating pupil progress were the sources of greatest concern during the student teaching experience; (2) students expressed a wish to meet informally with the cooperating teacher prior to their experiences; (3) they wanted information prior to their student teaching regarding how they would be evaluated; (4) a pass/fail grading system was not preferred; (5) the university supervisor should be either a fulltime person or a graduate assistant nearing completion of the doctorate; (6) university supervisors should make classroom observations at least every other week; and (7) they wanted three or four weeks of fulltime teaching responsibilities during the semester. The questionnaire used in this study accompanies this report. (Author/JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED156671

Kent Freeland

ASSESSING STUDENT TEACHING

About the Questionnaire

Student teaching in the Division of Early Childhood and Elementary Education at the University of Iowa occurs in the final phase of the Teacher Education Program. The semester is designed to give students a supervised student teaching experience in pre-school to grade six, along with periodic seminars to provide for discussion and evaluation of their experiences.

A questionnaire was devised to solicit opinions from student teachers at the end of their semester's work. Information from the questionnaire was to be used to develop a student teacher handbook and to improve field experiences for students in the Teacher Education Program.

Part of the questionnaire consisted of statements to which the students were asked to respond in one of five ways: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree; part consisted of marking (1) none, (2) some, or (3) much when the students were asked to state what concerns and problems certain matters presented during student teaching; part of the questionnaire was a multiple choice selection; and part was rank ordering priorities.

SP012 866

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

TABLE 1

STUDENT TEACHER REACTION TO STATEMENTS

	N	Mean	Degree of Agreement in Percent* -2	-1	0	+1	+2
1. I recommend more student teachers be placed with my cooperating teacher.	26	1.54	3.8	3.8	0.0	19.3	73.1
2. The university should provide an informal time some afternoon for student teachers to meet with cooperating teachers prior to the time student teaching begins.	26	1.38	0.0	0.0	7.6	46.2	46.2
3. Standards for evaluating student teachers by supervisors should be published and accessible to them before they begin their assignments.	26	1.38	0.0	0.0	11.5	38.5	50.0
4. Student teachers should attend August workshops at assigned school building one week prior to registration.	26	.65	3.8	15.4	19.2	34.6	27.0
5. I felt I had a chance to listen to the building principal explain the school's philosophy.	26	.35	19.2	7.7	11.5	42.3	19.2
6. All cooperating teachers need to have taken a course in planning for and carrying through a program with a student teacher.	25	.32	12.0	12.0	20.0	44.0	12.0
7. I feel student teacher seminars serve an important function.	26	.12	7.7	11.5	50.0	23.1	7.7
8. There needs to be a 5-year program with a full year internship as student teaching experience.	26	-.54	26.9	30.7	19.2	15.4	7.7
9. Grading for student teaching should be on a Pass/Fail basis.	25	-.77	28.0	44.0	12.0	12.0	4.0
10. I could have used more time for observation before I began teaching duties.	26	-.88	19.2	65.4	7.7	0.0	7.7
11. I was given too many teacher aide and secretarial duties during my student teaching experience.	26	-1.19	30.8	57.7	11.5	0.0	0.0

*Degree of Agreement: -2 = strongly disagree; -1 = disagree; 0 = neutral; +1 = agree; +2 = strongly agree;

Table 1

Evaluating the results of the first part of the questionnaire was done in this manner: responses to statements in Table 1 were assigned "minus two points" for a strongly disagree response; "minus one point" for a disagree response; "zero points" for a neutral response; "plus one point" for an agree response; and "plus two points" for a strongly agree response. A point total was then computed for each statement with a high number indicating strong agreement. Following are some comments about the table.

Statement 1: I recommend more student teachers be placed with my cooperating teacher. This had the highest mean which suggests that the student teachers had high regard for their cooperating (classroom) teachers.

Statement 2: The university should provide an informal time some afternoon for student teachers to meet with cooperating teachers prior to the time student teaching begins. Student teachers apparently feel a need for having an informal meeting with their cooperating teachers. This would be an opportunity to get to know each other better and to ask questions before the semester's work begins.

Statement 3: Standards for evaluating student teachers by supervisors should be published and accessible to them before they begin their assignments. Student teachers indicated that they felt it was important for their university supervisor to convey, before the semester begins, the standards for evaluation. No sutdent teacher strongly disagreed or even disagreed with the statement. Having supervisors make the grading procedure clear to the

student teachers at the start of the semester could alleviate some of the apprehension the student teachers feel about what the supervisors are looking for when they make observations.

Statement 4: Student teachers should attend August workshops at assigned school building one week prior to registration. There appeared to be some support for those who student teach in the fall semester to attend August workshops. This would give the student teachers a chance to participate in activities and discussions with other personnel in the school district.

Statement 5: I felt I had a chance to listen to the building principal explain the school's philosophy. The mean for this was .35 with about 62 percent of the student teachers indicating agreement or strong agreement. This reveals that most building principals are taking the time to discuss the school's philosophy with the student teachers.

Statement 6: All cooperating teachers need to have taken a course in planning for and carrying through a program with a student teacher. Student teachers tended to agree with this, but not in a decisive manner.

Statement 7: I feel student teacher seminars serve an important function. The poor showing for this statement indicates that seminars throughout the semester were not of great importance to the student teachers. The purpose of these seminars is to help provide a supportive setting where student teachers as a group can share common experiences and benefit from information on pertinent educational topics. These seminars need to be investigated to see what is discussed and how they are conducted so that student teachers will consider them important.

Statement 8: There needs to be a 5-year program with a full year internship as student teaching experience. This had substantial negative reaction. The student teachers did not favor a five-year program with a full year of internship. Some possible reasons for this reaction might be that it would add a year and thus be too expensive for the students; or that they felt one semester of student teaching was sufficient field experience. Student teachers' opinions on this matter need to be probed to obtain more accurate information about instituting a five-year program.

Statement 9: Grading for student teaching should be on a Pass/Fail basis. Grading, in general, always presents a problem. Pass/Fail is one method used to assess the completion of a student teaching experience. However, the students in this questionnaire did not consider that as a satisfactory experience.

Statement 10: I could have used more time for observation before I began teaching duties. Students indicated that they did not need added observation time before they began teaching duties.

Statement 11: I was given too many teacher aide and secretarial duties during my student teaching experience. This extends statement 10 because, once the teaching duties began, the student teachers did not feel that they were burdened with excessive teacher aide and secretarial work.

TABLE 2

STUDENT TEACHER CONCERN ABOUT PARTICULAR ITEMS

	N	Mean	Degree of Concern in Percent* 1	2	3
12. Motivating pupils who seem disinterested	26	2.8	0.0	19.2	80.8
13. Handling disciplinary problems	26	2.7	3.8	19.2	77.0
14. Evaluating pupil progress	26	2.7	3.8	23.1	73.1
15. Planning learning activities with students	26	2.6	7.7	26.9	65.4
16. Relating to faculty and staff at the building.	26	2.6	11.5	19.2	69.3
17. Using teaching aids	26	2.5	11.5	26.9	61.6
18. Understanding of subject matter	26	2.5	19.2	11.5	69.3
19. Understanding the goals of the school	26	2.4	3.8	53.9	42.3
20. Working with exceptional children	26	2.4	11.5	38.5	50.0
21. Understanding and using courses of study and curriculum guides	26	2.3	15.3	38.5	46.2
22. Relating to parents	26	2.1	27.0	38.5	34.5
23. Making effective use of community resources	26	2.0	27.0	50.0	23.0

*Degree of Concern: 1= none; 2= some; 3= much

Table 2

Students could respond to statements in Table 2 in one of three ways. If a student indicated that no concern was caused, "one point" was assigned; if some concern was caused, "two points;" and if much conern was caused, then "three points." Again, a high total point value suggests great concern and problems resulted from the statement.

The cause of greatest concern appeared to be number 12, motivating disinterested children. A child who is disinterested can often become a discipline problem; and the matter of maintaining discipline (number 13) was ranked second. These two are mentioned together to suggest that lack of motivation is one of several factors that could create classroom control problems for a student teacher.

Evaluating the progress of pupils (number 14) also was an area of great concern.

Planning learning activities (number 15) ; relating with the faculty (number 16); using teaching aids (number 17); understanding the subject matter (number 18); understanding the goals of the school (number 19); working with exceptional children (number 20); and utilizing curriculum guides (number 21) were other areas of moderate concern.

Relating to parents (number 22) was not of great concern, possibley because there were few opportunities for the student teachers to meet or interact with parents.

The least concern was caused by number 23, using community resources.

Among many explanations for this are: (1) that the student teachers had sufficient background in their methods courses; (2) that they received sufficient help from cooperating teachers; or (3) that they weren't called upon to use community resources.

TABLE 3

STUDENT TEACHER RESPONSE ON MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

		Response in Percent	
24. How often do you feel the university supervisor should make classroom observation? Circle one.	a. Once a month	0.0	N=26
	b. Every other week	53.8	
	c. Once a week	46.2	
25. What do you think is the optimum number of weeks to have a full-time teaching responsibility during a 16 week experience? Circle one	a. Less than one week	0.0	N=24
	b. More than one but less than two	4.2	
	c. More than two but less than three	25.0	
	d. More than three but less than four	37.5	
	e. More than four	33.3	
26. Overall my reaction to my student teaching experience was very positive. Circle one.	a. Strongly agree	92.4	N=26
	b. Agree	3.8	
	c. Neutral	0.0	
	d. Disagree	3.8	
	e. Strongly disagree	0.0	

Table 3

Table 3 presents three multiple choice questions. The percent of students who selected each response is indicated to the right of the response. Number 24 indicates a split for the frequency of observations by the university supervisor. Once a week or every other week were desirable to the student teachers; but once a month was too infrequent.

For number 25, opinion was split on the amount of time to have complete charge of the classroom. The mode was letter d--three to four weeks. Next highest was more than four weeks. About 71 percent of the student teachers felt they wanted more than three weeks.

Number 26 indicated an overall positive attitude toward their student teaching experiences.

Student Teacher Supervisors

Below is question 27 along with responses whereby student teachers expressed their opinion as to who should supervise them.

27. Rank the following as your first, second, and third choice for a university supervisor:

N=22	49 points	a. The present system with a Ph.D. Candidate
	50 points	b. A non-Ph.D. candidate, hired on a full-time basis to supervise.
	30 points	c. A regular faculty member

The scoring of this question was performed in this manner: a first choice was given three points; a second choice, two points; and a third choice, one point. The highest point total was split fairly evenly between

(1) a non-Ph.D. candidate hired on a full-time basis and (2) the present system with a Ph.D. candidate. The least desirable option was having a regular university faculty member observe.

This is a very important issue: who should serve as supervisors of student teachers ? If student teachers prefer to have certain people supervise while objecting to others, what are the reasons? Directors of student teaching programs need to explore and be aware of monetary costs, public relations, and appropriate utilization of personnel when appointing supervisors.

Conclusions

Student teachers in this questionnaire indicated strongly about these matters:

1. They would like some time before their student teaching experience for the purpose of meeting with their cooperating teachers on an informal basis. (number 2)

2. They would like information before their student teaching experience regarding the criteria and methods by which supervisors will evaluate them. (number3)

3. Grading for student teaching should not be a Pass/Fail basis. (number 9)

4. Motivating disinterested pupils, (number 12); handling disciplinary problems (number 13); and evaluating pupil progress (number 14) were sources of the greatest concern and trouble during their student teaching experiences.

The questionnaire suggests that the supervisor should be either a full-time person (perhaps a classroom teacher on a temporary leave from the school district) or a graduate assistant nearing completion of a doctorate. (number 27)

The supervisor should make classroom observations at least every other week or, if possible, every week. (number 24)

Finally, student teachers want full-time teaching responsibilty during the semester; they suggested three or more weeks. (number 25)